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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BAKU 000411

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/CARC, DRL

E.O.12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [AJ](#)

SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN: OIL ACADEMY SHOOTING INVESTIGATION CONTINUES

REF: A. BAKU 386; B. BAKU 366

¶1. (U) Sensitive But Unclassified.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: On May 15 the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and the Prosecutor General issued a public statement announcing further evidence uncovered in the investigation of the April 30 shooting at the State Oil Academy (reftels). This evidence backs up the GOAJ's case that the alleged shooter Farda Gadirov was mentally ill. The statement also accuses political forces in the country and their foreign sponsors of using the tragedy for their own political ends. This statement, however, has done little to quash speculation throughout the country about the shooter's possible motives and foreign connections. The lack of an official public mourning for the victims is generally considered to have been a misstep by the GOAJ, and may have long-term implications for the government. End Summary

¶3. (SBU) On May 15 the MIA and Prosecutor General's Office issued a joint statement on the investigation related to the shooting at State Oil Academy on April 30 (reftels). According to the statement, the criminal investigation group, which consists of the officers of MIA and Prosecutor General's Office, has questioned the neighbors of alleged gunman Farda Gadirov, as well as the teachers and students of the Academy, who had witnessed the shooting, and the drivers and passengers of Georgia-Baku bus that Gadirov allegedly had taken to Azerbaijan. Moreover, Gadirov's travel route and phone calls were investigated, and apartments where he had stayed in Baku and the Dashtepe village of Georgia were checked.

¶4. (SBU) The investigation group gathered video records of areas where Gadirov had been seen on the day of shooting. The investigation group traveled to the village of Dashtepe, where Gadirov spent several months, and to Russia to gather information about Gadirov's connections and contacts. During the joint criminal investigation in Dashtepe village of Georgia with Georgian law-enforcement bodies, the Azerbaijani investigation group found many documents, including records related to the gun used at the shooting, dated 24 October 2008, purchased from "Kula ARMS Georgia" in Tbilisi. Additionally, 14 cartridges, two boxes of bullets, a knife, gloves, photos, 15 video cassettes, a phonebook, etc., were uncovered.

¶5. (SBU) Law enforcement figures noted that there were some notes on the photos: "February 24, 2009, Gadirov Farda - lonely wolf" and "November 10, 2008, Gadirov Farda - My every step is death". While investigating his mobile phone records, the investigation group found several video records of him posing with a pistol. Accompanying those videos were notes in Russian saying "Look at my phone, you'll see who I am," "There is no love for me, only hate," and "I'm coming to Baku and to shoot at everybody on my way regardless of their age; I'll never give up police. I'll enjoy killing".

¶16. (SBU) As a result of joint investigation with Georgian law-enforcement bodies, Azerbaijani law enforcement claimed to discover that Farda Gadirov had been in close touch with Georgian citizen Sergey Yegorovich Grigoryan, born in 1961, Armenian by origin. Together they paid 500 lari (Georgian money) for the Makarov gun and 200 lari for 100 cartridges. The investigation group is reportedly looking into Sergey Grigoryan's involvement in the crime.

¶17. (SBU) The authorities have made clear that the investigation of this crime is under the President's direct control. Local law-enforcement bodies seem concerned about alternative thoughts. Their statement says that some domestic political representatives and media workers, and their foreign sponsors spread rumors, false testimonies collected from the students of the State Oil Academy with the aim to destabilize the situation in the country, and to weaken the faith to the government. In addition, several of the young people who were detained during protests on May 10 (reftel A) have reported that in the last week police have come to their parents' houses and questioned them about their children's activities. In addition, Education Minister Misir Mardanov's May 19 statements that schools should forego end-of-school-year proms this year was largely interpreted as a sign that the government is clearly concerned that the April 30 shootings may not be an isolated once-in-a-generation tragedy.

#### Alternative Viewpoints

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¶18. (SBU) The Oil Academy shooting is still a major topic for Azerbaijan's media and among independent bloggers and other commentators. Some media sources claim that the video recordings and photos found at Gadirov's house in Dashtepe, Georgia, are false.

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The person captured on the video is not Farda Gadirov, they say, but rather a person who looks similar. Likewise, they maintain that the film that he supposedly created was made not by mobile phone but by a professional video camera, perhaps after the fact. Many people continue to state that there was Russian involvement in the shooting, given Gadirov and his family's strong ties to Russia.

¶19. (SBU) By publicizing this "evidence," including pictures of Farda Gadirov posing with a pistol, the government, some say, is trying to hide the actual work of terrorists or others with political motives that might really lie behind the crime. It is more convenient, some say, to introduce Gadirov as a psychologically deranged person. In that light, some in Baku have taken note that Dayanat Rzayev, Head Psychologist of the Regional Physiology Centre, said that there was no medical record proving him to be mentally ill.

#### Comment

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¶10. (SBU) This shooting, the first of its kind in Azerbaijan, continues to resonate. The official statements regarding the investigation have not calmed speculation about the motives, especially given that there is little public confidence in the capabilities of the country's justice system. The GOAJ's decision not to declare a time of public mourning for the victims continued to be criticized by many, especially among the more politically active youth. The strong anti-government reaction sparked by the events may have long-term implications for the public support of this government.